



Catholic Faith, Life & Creed

A Complete Catechesis for Christian Living

Breaking Open the Word
Mary Birmingham

29th Sunday of Ordinary Time | Year B



Rublev's Museum, 1497, Passion Icon, 1497.
"Can you drink the cup I will drink?"



Begin with the Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Option 1: Use Opening Prayer from the Sunday Liturgy. (Found in your parish Sacramentary.)

Option 2: Use the prayer provided just below.

God of My Life

Only in love can I find you, my God.
In love the gates of my soul spring open,
allowing me to breathe a new air of freedom
and forget my own petty self.
In love my whole being streams forth
out of the rigid confines of narrowness and anxious self-assertion,
which makes me a prisoner of my own poverty and emptiness.
In love all the powers of my soul flow out toward you,
wanting never more to return,
but to lose themselves completely in you,
since by your love you are the inmost center of my heart,
closer to me than I am to myself.
But when I love you,
when I manage to break out of the narrow circle of self
and leave behind the restless agony
of unanswered questions,
when my blinded eyes no longer look merely from afar
and from the outside upon your unapproachable brightness,
and much more when you yourself,
O Incomprehensible One,
have become through love the inmost center of my life,
then I can bury myself entirely in you, O mysterious God,
and with myself all my questions.
Karl Rahner, SJ

Catholic
**Faith, Life
& Creed**
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Word worksheets
connect with *Catholic
Faith, Life, & Creed*
Doctrinal Sessions.

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Liturgical Context

- ▶ Today's liturgy continues the slow movement toward the fulfillment of Jesus' ministry that we will proclaim and manifest in the weeks ahead as the liturgical year winds down.
- ▶ Both the first and second reading echo the readings of Good Friday and remind us that Jesus is getting closer to the fulfillment of his mission; he is getting closer to Jerusalem and his sacrificial destiny.

Catechist invites participants to respond to the following questions in groups of two, and then surface insights in the wider group.

- ▶ What spoke to your heart in today's liturgy?
- ▶ What reading, symbol, music, homily, spoke to you and why did it speak to you?

First Reading: Isaiah 53: 10-11

If time is a consideration, omit reflection on one or both of the readings; simply make a statement about the reading such as:

- ▶ **Today's reading from Isaiah portrays the Suffering Servant whose sacrificial suffering resulted in universal redemption.**
- ▶ Today's reading is taken from the Fourth Servant Song of Isaiah.
- ▶ The people were in the throes of exile, waiting for freedom from bondage.
- ▶ The author of Deutero-Isaiah lamented over the people's dire situation.
- ▶ The author was offering hope and encouragement to the people in captivity.
- ▶ Prior to their captivity the people enjoyed affluence, prosperity and the good life. They became lackadaisical in their faith. Greed and excessive love of material goods took over their lives.
- ▶ Exile, however, changed them.
- ▶ Deutero-Isaiah maintained that the people were demoralized, depressed, destitute and in danger of rejecting their faith as a result of their seemingly hopeless situation.
- ▶ Rather than admonish them, Deutero-Isaiah had great compassion for them and offered them loving consolation.
- ▶ He encouraged them with words of hope and courage and pleaded with them not to lose faith as they awaited vindication.
- ▶ Christians associated the Suffering Servant with the person of Jesus and believed that the author was foretelling the advent of the Messiah and his passion and death.
- ▶ Jewish biblical scholarship does not identify who the Suffering Servant is.
- ▶ Christians, on the other hand, identify the Servant as their Lord and Messiah.
- ▶ Jesus identified with the mission of the Servant. Rather than a warrior Messiah, he understood his role to that of a Suffering Servant.
- ▶ The Servant Songs present the Christian church with a spiritual theology of Jesus' paschal death.
- ▶ By all appearances he was stripped of everything but in the end was vindicated, raised up and glorified by God.
- ▶ The pericope (segment of reading) ends with echoes of hope.

- ▶ Isaiah's Suffering Servant embodies a profound theology of the cross. Like the Suffering servant Jesus' passion and death was redemptive. His suffering was vicarious; he took the place of others and he was innocent. His sacrifice was not for a select few but for everyone (for the many) and ultimately he was vindicated.
- ▶ The Servant's sacrifice resulted in the righteousness of all people.
- ▶ The saving mission of the Servant would be universal—for the entire world.
- ▶ Jewish Biblical scholarship understood the image of Servant to be a metaphor for Israel itself not for the Messiah as Christians affirm.
- ▶ Isaiah points us in the direction of Jesus' universal salvific mission.
- ▶ Jesus redeemed the world through his vicarious suffering and sacrifice of his life.



Mystagogy

reflection on the mysteries

Catechist invites participants to respond to one or more of the following questions in groups of two, and then surface brief insights in the wider group. If time allows, catechist shares from his or her own life experience.

- ▶ What is the Good News for us today in this reading?
- ▶ What lesson is there for us today in the people's before and after experience of the exile (in which they went from riches to rags--the good life--to a life of slavery)? What can we learn from their experience?
- ▶ What does the Suffering Servant have to teach us about the cross of Christ?
- ▶ What does the Suffering Servant have to teach us about the daily crosses in our lives?
- ▶ What does this reading teach us about hope?
- ▶ Why is hope an important virtue?
- ▶ For what do you hope in your life?

Second Reading: Hebrews 4: 14-16

If time is a consideration, omit reflection on one or both of the readings; simply make a statement about the reading such as:

- ▶ The author of Hebrews reflects on Jesus' as High Priest and his humanity—the way in which he was like us in all things except sin.
- ▶ Today's reading focuses on Jesus' humanity.
- ▶ He is qualified to be High Priest as he is a human being.
- ▶ He understands the human condition; he knows its frailty and weakness.
- ▶ He walked in the footsteps of the human community.
- ▶ He knows human suffering; he knows human betrayal; he knows the human heart.
- ▶ He knows what it means to be tempted.
- ▶ Jesus was tempted to abandon his mission and God's will for the salvation of the

world.

- ▶ He is like us in all things but sin.
- ▶ The sinlessness of which the Scripture speaks refers primarily to complete and total obedience and faithfulness to God's will.
- ▶ Jesus was completely and utterly faithful to his Father.
- ▶ Salvation history chronicles a pattern of sin and grace. In that history God loved his people and entered into a covenant relationship with them.
- ▶ The people in turn entered into a reciprocal covenant relationship with God. God loved the people and the people loved God. The people sinned. God punished the people for their faithlessness. God forgave them and ultimately restored the covenant into which he and the people entered.
- ▶ The people were faithful for a time and then the pattern of sin and ultimate grace started all over again: sin, punishment, forgiveness grace and restoration.
- ▶ Jesus was sinless; he was not only obedient and faithful; he was faithful unto death.



Mystagogy

reflection on the mysteries

Catechist invites participants to respond to the following questions in groups of two and then surface brief insights in the wider group. If time allows, catechist shares from his or her own life experience.

- ▶ What is the Good News in this reading?
- ▶ What does the salvation of history teach us about god's relationship with his people?
- ▶ What does Jesus' faithfulness teach us about his mission?
- ▶ Why is it important to stress Jesus' humanity?
- ▶ Why is it important to remember that Jesus walked in our shoes?
- ▶ Why is it important in your life to know that Jesus walked in our footsteps?

Gospel: Mark 10: 35-45

Read or summarize the Gospel, perhaps provide a copy of the text for further reflection.

Gospel Exegesis

For those catechists who prefer an abbreviated interpretation of the Gospel refer to the bulleted points that follow and then choose questions for your reflection found at the end of end of the entire exegesis. (Please note: catechist may intersperse the questions at the end of the exegesis throughout your presentation where appropriate.)

Catechist invites participants to respond to the following questions before presenting the exegesis.

- ▶ What specifically touched you in this Gospel?
- ▶ What does this Gospel mean to you?

Abbreviated treatment of the Gospel:

- ▶ As Jesus continues his journey to Jerusalem Mark raises the stakes, supplies mounting tension and foreshadows Jesus' imminent encounter with his enemies.
- ▶ James and John reveal their unadulterated ambition in their question to Jesus. Perhaps they want get in line before the others ask the same question.
- ▶ Jesus responds by asking them if they had any idea what they were asking.
- ▶ Were they willing to face torture death and complete humiliation?
- ▶ Were they willing to be beaten, stripped and tortured into oblivion?
- ▶ Were they willing to be executed like a common criminal?
- ▶ If so, then by all means, get in line.
- ▶ The only power and adulation they would receive in sitting at his right hand was complete powerlessness and death on a cross. Did they still want the exalted place of honor they were seeking?
- ▶ They would eventually gladly take that exalted martyr's throne, but in today's Gospel they were lost in very human emotions of pride, prestige and misplaced and misdirected honor.
- ▶ Jesus tells them that only God could grant their request. God did not favor one disciple over another.
- ▶ The other disciples are righteously indignant over the end run negotiating of their fellow comrades. They are jealous and angry.
- ▶ Jesus reminds them about his earlier exhortations to them regarding who is great in the kingdom. Jesus appealed to his role as Servant.
- ▶ Jesus was a Servant who was willing to lay down his life for those he served.
- ▶ Jesus was willing to lay down his life in order to save God's people from their bondage to sin. He taught them that servant leadership required the emptying of self and self-sacrifice for those he served.
- ▶ The reign Jesus came to establish would not be based on power structures that exalt some at the expense of others.
- ▶ The disciples completely misinterpret what is about to take place. They want places of honor when he mounts his throne. Little did they know that his throne would be that of a tree and his crown would be woven thorn driven into his skull.
- ▶ They had not bargained for that place at the table nor did they want it.
- ▶ Their idea of Jesus' glory was understood in royal, earthly terms.
- ▶ The glory Mark exalts in his narrative is eschatological glory—the glory of the Parousia—the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation at the culmination of the world.
- ▶ The disciples were driven by blind ambition and could not, would not see beyond their own delusions of grandeur.
- ▶ Mark emphasizes the disciples' gross misunderstanding of Jesus' mission in multiple exclamation points!
- ▶ Jesus' echoes Old Testament allusions to *cup* when he asks if they can drink from his. *Cup* in Old Testament understanding was both a cup of suffering and a cup of joy. Could they drink from Jesus' cup of suffering? They did not realize what they

were asking.

- ▶ The baptism of which Jesus speaks is a baptism of trial and travail. Jesus was about to be drowned in tortuous pain and suffering.
- ▶ He asks them if it is true glory they seek. If so then they must be willing to plunge into the waters of travail.
- ▶ For Jesus true leadership requires the willingness to be submerged in the waters of pain, suffering and death.
- ▶ The disciples insisted that they were ready and willing.
- ▶ One day they would be willing.
- ▶ Right now, however, they were steeped in denial, delusions of glory and dreams of superiority and power.
- ▶ Jesus insists that such places are God's to give. Discipleship does not entitle one to special consideration not given to others.
- ▶ Leaders are necessary in the kingdom, but leaders must be willing to serve; they must put others before their own self-interests.
- ▶ Mark does not spare the disciples' reputation. He lets their petty arrogance—their sin-- be exposed for all time.
- ▶ They only care about themselves. There is no mention of the ordeal Jesus is about to endure.
- ▶ They offer no words of sympathy, care or concern. They offer no solace for the horrendous ordeal he is about to endure.
- ▶ They claim to be his friends and confidants yet their only concern is climbing the upward ladder of success, achievement, power and control. How human of them! How humanly egotistical and self-seeking.
- ▶ Jesus foretells his tortuous murder and betrayal and they are caught up in privileged placement at the king's table.
- ▶ When Jesus exhorts them not to lord their power over others it is a subtle reminder that even though earthly powers, leaders and ruler allude themselves into thinking they are in control, God in fact is the only one in control of human destiny.
- ▶ God can, will and has toppled powers that blindly assert themselves as invincible. No power is beyond God's authority.
- ▶ Power structures that rule with an iron hand rather than the loving hand of service are outside of God's intention for the human family.
- ▶ Yet every structure—secular, religious, church and civic-- has forgotten this truth at some time or another throughout human history—both in times ancient and contemporary. It is the nature of organized, human power structures.
- ▶ Jesus does not mince any words. Leadership requires self-sacrificing service.
- ▶ Overt, ostentatious, arrogant displays of oppressive power have no place in the kingdom.

This brings the abbreviated interpretation to a close. Refer to the questions at the end of the entire exegesis and choose the appropriate questions for your reflection.

Further elaboration of the Gospel:

The following exegesis is provided for your further and continued reflection.

- ▶ In addition to the above material there are several other interesting elements in this Gospel for our reflection.
- ▶ The way in which the word *ransom* is used in this text refers to an offering for the atonement of sin.
- ▶ When Jesus laid down his life to free those held captive to sin he fulfilled the role of Servant in Isaiah (53:10-11).
- ▶ Jesus paid the debt—he gave his life to redeem the human race.
- ▶ Scripture tells us that he gave his life in ransom **for many**. Herein lays the reason Jesus had to die. The word *for* in *for many* translates from the Greek to mean *instead of*. Jesus gave his life *instead of* our life.
- ▶ The word *ransom* translates from the Greek and means *to buy the freedom of a slave or prisoner*.
- ▶ The person making the ransom would pay a huge sacrificial payment that matched the value or paid the debt of the slave or the prisoner in order to secure their release or freedom.
- ▶ Jesus came to pay that kind of ransom.
- ▶ The slavery he came to ransom can be described as enormous, cosmic evil that required an enormous, cosmic response—a response that only God could give.
- ▶ It is easy to fall into the trap of seeing God much like the bloodthirsty gods that required human sacrifice such as found in Homer's Iliad. Agamemnon did not get the necessary winds to reach Troy until he appeased the gods by sacrificing his daughter.
- ▶ Sometimes our theology of the cross can come across as a reinterpretation of those ancient gods who demanded appeasement through human sacrifice. The sacrifice of Jesus could sound to some as though God was demanding blood sacrifice as appeasement for sin and payment before releasing the captives of sin.
- ▶ That, however, is not what Jesus' sacrifice is about.
- ▶ We could ask, "Why doesn't God just forgive everyone and be done with it? Why did Jesus have to die?"
- ▶ Why did he have to become the ransom?
- ▶ Jesus did not have to die despite God's love; he had to die because of it. Why?
- ▶ Because all life-changing love is substitutionary and it is sacrificial.
- ▶ To love as Jesus loves means we substitute ourselves for the other—just as Maximilian Kolbe substituted himself for the prisoner who was going to be killed in a Nazi concentration camp. Kolbe substituted himself and became the ransom for that prisoner. He substituted himself and in the process sacrificed his own life for the sake of another.
- ▶ If we were to love a person whose life is perfect it costs us nothing. When we try to love someone who is in trouble, someone who has incredible needs, and someone who is persecuted or who is spiritually or emotionally wounded to the core, it is going to cost us. We cannot love them without taking on their suffering—substituting ourselves for their suffering. A transfer of some kind is

- required so that their troubles, their problems in some way transfer to us.
- ▶ The only way to love them is for us to become allow our selves to be poured out for them—a total kenosis—to allow the fullness of love within us to reach out and touch them.
 - ▶ Jesus loved the prostitutes and tax collectors—the dregs of society--into healing and wholeness.
 - ▶ We have to empty ourselves of the love within us and allow it to be poured out into the desperate souls God puts in our path.
 - ▶ If we want to follow him we must be willing to love with a substitutionary, sacrificial love—just as he loved us.
 - ▶ He substituted himself in ransom for each and every one of us.
 - ▶ He, in turn, invites us to do the same.
 - ▶ Jesus showed us what it means to truly love another as God loves us.
 - ▶ He showed us what it means to be in complete and total union with God—to embody the love that God has for us.
 - ▶ A theologian once said that our life situation is not our life—it is rather what we fall through to get to our life.
 - ▶ Our real life—the life for which we were created is complete and total union with God--the God who knows us best and loves us most.
 - ▶ We cannot get to that life, however, without passing through the cross.
 - ▶ We cannot get to that life without substituting our life, ransoming our life, for another.
 - ▶ We cannot get to that life without taking up our cross, and following Jesus to Calvary.
 - ▶ Jesus ransomed his life for us—he substituted his life for ours—we are the ones who should have been on that cross--he showed us the depths of his love and ours. He continues to ask us, “Do you want to follow me? Then go out and love one another unto death!”
 - ▶ Thus, today and every day Jesus calls to us from that nail-scarred throne and says:
 - “Do you see how much I love you? And then he stretched out his arms and he died.”
 - ▶ In the shame and honor based culture of the day it would have been customary for the brothers to seek a higher place of honor. People divided themselves into groups called factions. People in those factions were committed to the leader but not necessarily to the other members of the faction. Thus, the brothers would have logically vied for a higher place of honor in the faction.
 - ▶ Jesus reminded them that he already possessed honor through his participation in the cup of suffering.
 - ▶ There is another less transparent meaning in the cup dialogue. In first century culture the head of household filled the cup of those at table. Every person was to receive the cup from his hand. The cup was understood as a sign of the lot in life that God had appointed for each person (Pss 11:6; 16:5; 23:5).
 - ▶ Jesus accepted the lot in life that God had appointed for him thus achieving God’s very own honor. The brothers believed they too could achieve similar honor.
 - ▶ Jesus reminded them that God was the patron and he (Jesus) was the

intermediary. Jesus could introduce them to God, but only God could determine a person's place of honor.

- ▶ Jesus invites a reversal of major proportions—status reversal.
- ▶ People in positions of power should assume the status of slaves and serve others because Jesus ransomed his life—he paved the way and demonstrated what true service is—laying down one's life for the sake of others.



Mystagogy

reflection on the mysteries

Catechist invites participants to respond to ONE or MORE appropriate questions (as time allows) in small groups of four. Use the last three or four minutes to surface their insights in the wider group. Catechist responds by sharing his or her own experience. See appendix for an example. (@ Ten-twelve minutes)

- ▶ What is the Good News in the Gospel?
- ▶ What is the lesson in this Gospel?
- ▶ What are the primary themes in this Gospel?
- ▶ Have you or anyone close to you ever loved in a substitutionary manner? In other words, have you in any way ever sacrificed yourself for the love of another?
- ▶ Have you ever been the recipient of such love?
- ▶ What does Jesus teach us about service?
- ▶ Have you ever served another in the manner Jesus invites?
- ▶ Has anyone ever served you in such a manner?
- ▶ Why is Jesus' message so difficult for societies of all ages to accept?
- ▶ What was it about Jesus' faithfulness that prompted others to have him killed?
- ▶ Why was he such a threat?
- ▶ Why did Jesus have to die in ransom for our bondage to sin?
- ▶ What does Jesus teach us about servanthood?
- ▶ What does he teach us about leadership?
- ▶ Have you ever experienced the leadership that Jesus speaks about?

Catechist invites participants to reflect on the following question in the group or in their journal.

- ▶ After reflection on today's liturgy, what one thing is God asking of you at this time in your life?
- ▶ What obstacles stand in the way of following God's call?

Concluding Prayer

*THE PRAYER,
O LORD MY GOD
(By Saint Anselm.)*

*O Lord my God.
Teach my heart this day
where and how to find you.*

*You have made me and re-made me,
and you have bestowed on me
all the good things I possess,
and still I do not know you.
I have not yet done
that for which I was made.*

*Teach me to seek you,
for I cannot seek you
unless you teach me,
or find you
unless you show yourself to me.*

*Let me seek you in my desire;
let me desire you in my seeking.
Let me find you by loving you;
let me love you when I find you.*

OR

Minor rite: Blessing: 95-97.

APPENDIX

- Have you or anyone close to you ever loved in a substitutionary manner? In other words, have you in any way ever sacrificed yourself for the love of another?

There are so many wounded people out there. I gave birth to one. He is mentally ill and homeless. The only way he is kept alive as he treks across this great land of ours is for us die over and over again—emotionally, spiritually and personally. Each month we break our personal emotional, physical, spiritual and financial bank just to keep him alive—just so he does not die on the street. We love him in the midst of total powerlessness. We can do nothing to help him. All we can do is love him.

Loving him is painful, tortuous and costs us our serenity, our peace and our security. Yes, there are wounded, broken and alienated people out there and God makes us responsible for them; their problems are our problems. People are emotionally sinking, they are hurting and they desperately need to be loved.

When they are with us we very humanly want to look at our watches and make a graceful exit, because listening to them with all their problems can be demanding. It is exhausting to be a friend to an emotionally damaged person. Yet the only way that person has any chance of digging himself or herself out of the pit and begin the process of healing is if someone loves them. The only way to love them is for us to allow our selves to be poured out for them—a total kenosis—to allow the fullness of love within us to reach out and touch them.

Jesus loved the prostitutes and tax collectors—the dregs of society--into healing and wholeness. We have to empty ourselves of the love within us and allow it to be poured out into the desperate souls God puts in our path. If we hold on to our emotional comfort and safety zones and avoid such people, they will sink. (When we love with a true substitutionary love we know our boundaries and avoid the self-serving trap of co-dependency.) The only way to love them is through substituting ourselves as Jesus did and sacrifice ourselves in return for their restored life.

A couple's daughter came home one day announcing she was pregnant with twins. She had no insurance and the father wanted nothing to do with her. Hers was a high-risk pregnancy. She felt trapped, alone and nowhere to turn. She contemplated abortion as she felt she had no options.

They called the local diocesan office for help. The office personnel excitedly and proudly announced that they could offer her baby clothes and that if she wanted to deliver those children she would need to apply to the state. They approached the state and were told that she made too much money the previous year even though she was presently unemployed and thus was ineligible for aid and even if she did receive aid no doctor in town would accept it. More and more it seemed that abortion was her only recourse. Her parents were approaching the second half of life. They saved for the future they dreamed of and it was nearly upon them. They loved their daughter and abortion was

unthinkable and untenable.

The Church failed her, the state failed her, but the love of her parents did not fail her. They could have sent her packing and told her that she made her bed now she must lie in it.

Instead they embraced her, loved her, helped her get the help she needed, forfeited their savings to bring those twins into the world and for five years put their lives on hold caring for their daughter and those precious twins.

They substituted their hopes and their dreams in love for their daughter. This is exactly what Jesus was telling us in today's Gospel.

If we want to follow him we must be willing to love with a substitutionary, sacrificial love—just as he loved us. He substituted himself in ransom for each and every one of us. He, in turn, invites us to do the same. Jesus showed us what it means to truly love another as God loves us. He showed us what it means to be in complete and total union with God—to embody the love that God has for us.



Connecting Liturgy with Catholic Doctrine

Possible doctrinal themes that flow from this week's
Liturgy of the Word and Eucharist

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 53: 10-11 | Hebrews 4: 14-16 | Mark 10: 35-45

Cross and Paschal Mystery
Moral Decision Making
Holy Orders
Church and Ecclesiology
Church Structure

Faith
Prayer
Mary Model for the Church
Eschatology
Eucharist Series

Other themes may be chosen as well--choose from the scope and sequence chart and create your own connecting statement. The following statements make the appropriate connections between the doctrinal issue you have chosen and the liturgy of the day.

CROSS AND PASCHAL MYSTERY

Isaiah seeks to comfort a people broken by their years in captivity. He promises the advent a Suffering Servant who Christians later understood to be Jesus Christ, Savior of the world. Jesus predicts his passion three times. He invites his disciples if they can drink from the same cup. The focus of today's liturgy naturally leads us to focus our attention on what the Church teaches about the CROSS AND PASCHAL MYSTERY.

SIN AND GRACE

Jesus is exalted as the great High Priest in the Letter to the Hebrews. Jesus was sinless but he was human and understood the temptations we face. He too was tempted. He understands the human heart. We, unlike Jesus, were born into sin and face temptation to sin each and every day. We trust in God who gives us Grace—his own self—and strengthens us to live righteous lives. It is thus appropriate that we focus our attention on what the Church teaches about SIN AND GRACE.

HOLY ORDERS

Jesus presents his catechism on leadership. He insists that the kingdom needs effective leaders, but he guards against blind ambition. He illustrates what it means to be an effective leader. One way that leadership continues in the Church is through the ministerial priesthood. It is thus appropriate that we focus our attention on what the Church teaches about the sacrament of HOLY ORDERS.

CHURCH AND ECCLESIOLOGY

Jesus teaches what it means to live in the kingdom. He teaches what true leadership means. Jesus left us his legacy of servant leader. He did not abandon his Church but still today is present to us, teaching us how to lead one another in our baptismal responsibility to establish the reign of God. That kingdom and responsibility continues in the Church today. It is thus fitting that we focus our attention on CHURCH and ECCLESIOLOGY.

CHURCH STRUCTURE

Jesus teaches what it means to live in the kingdom. He teaches what true leadership means. Jesus left us his legacy of servant leader. He did not abandon his Church but still today is present to us, teaching us how to lead one another in our baptismal responsibility to establish the reign of God. That kingdom and responsibility continues in the Church today. It is thus fitting that we focus our attention on CHURCH STRUCTURE.

FAITH

Jesus has been presenting his catechism on what it means to live in the kingdom. It requires that we follow the example of Jesus, the Suffering Servant, who walks the way to Jerusalem and the Cross. It is only through faith that we will remain steadfast to follow Jesus to the Cross. Faith is a freely given gift of God, one that must be embraced. Jesus has been giving us a catechism on what it means to have committed faith in the kingdom of God for the past weeks. It is thus fitting that we focus our attention on what the Church teaches us about FAITH.

PRAYER

Jesus has been presenting his catechism on what it means to live in the kingdom. It requires that we follow the example of Jesus, the Suffering Servant, who walks the way to Jerusalem and the Cross. If we hope to remain steadfast we must be committed to an intimate relationship with God, rooted in prayer. It is thus fitting that we focus our attention on what the Church teaches us about PRAYER.

MARY MODEL FOR THE CHURCH

October is the month we remember and honor the Virgin Mary, Mother of God and model disciple. It is thus appropriate we focus our attention this month and in today's session on MARY, MODEL DISCIPLE.

ESCHATOLOGY: HEAVEN, HELL and PURGATORY

Since the liturgical year is slowly winding down and coming to the end, the focus will turn to last things, the end times, and the afterlife. It is thus fitting that we focus our attention on ESCHATOLOGY: HEAVEN, HELL and PURGATORY

EUCCHARIST SERIES:

Our premier celebration of the Paschal Mystery—the life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension sending of the Spirit is made manifest and re-presented for us in the Eucharistic liturgy. Thus any Sunday would be an appropriate time to focus our attention on the Eucharistic liturgy. This week we continue the series on the Mass. Today we will focus on part ____ of the Eucharistic Series.